



November 22, 2013

1115 Medicaid Waiver

Pathways 3: Population Health; Wellness Strategies

American Cancer Society Comments

The American Cancer Society is pleased to see wellness strategies and a prevention focus outlined under Pathways 3: population health in the concept paper released this month.

Based on research, we know that 60% of cancer deaths could be prevented by living healthy lifestyles through better diet and physical activity. We believe there are several opportunities to partner with the Medicaid program and the Illinois Department of Public Health to improve health outcomes and disparities for beneficiaries while finding cost savings at the same time.

After heart disease, lung cancer is the number one cause of preventive death for adults. In Illinois, the adult smoking rate is currently 20.9%.¹ There is a great opportunity to strengthen tobacco cessation coverage in Medicaid, while also working to expand the utilization of existing coverage by beneficiaries. We urge Medicaid to look for ways to increase promotion of tobacco cessation services while also expanding coverage to include access to individual and group counseling. We know that on average, it will take an adult between 5-7 attempts to quit before they are successful. Having access to a variety of cessation techniques, and promoting the coverage of those techniques to Medicaid beneficiaries, is vital to reducing our smoking rate in Illinois.

¹ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control. <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>



Another strategy to improve health outcomes and increase cost savings is to invest in age-appropriate cancer screenings for program enrollees. We know it is far less expensive to invest in preventive cancer programs than to treat cancer. We also know that great racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities exist in Illinois in incidence and death rates in colon and breast cancer. Colon cancer is both preventable and treatable if found in its earliest stages. Illinois has one of the lowest screening rates for colon cancer, and the highest incidence rate. Last year, 64% of residents in Illinois reported receiving a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy². Early detection is also of vital importance with breast cancer, and mammography is the single most effective method of early detection. In Illinois, only 58% of women 40 years and older have received a mammogram in the past year³. We recommend building a solid infrastructure utilizing evidence-based strategies to improve cancer screening rates within the Medicaid population, which will lower our state's mortality rate from these cancers while also reducing the dollars spent on treating late-stage disease.

The American Cancer Society looks forward to working together in the near future to help transform the Medicaid program under the population health pathway. We stand

² Centers for Disease Control.

³ American Cancer Society. *Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2013-2014*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, Inc. 2013.



ready to collaborate with our State partners on using evidence-based strategies to increase the promotion and utilization of tobacco cessation and cancer screenings within the expanding Medicaid program.

Lakeshore Division

225 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60601 **t)** 312.641.6150 **f)** 312.641.6588
Cancer Information 1.800.ACS.2345 www.cancer.org